Belfast College March 11th 1846

Dear Brethren

We are bound to apologise for our long silence. Singular though you no doubt pronounced it to be, that we should not have received a reply to your kind letter, and to which we came on this side the Atlantic, we can assure you however that such is not the case, and that our interest in you is nothing abated. You may then naturally ask why you have remained unanswered so long. To this we reply, 1st that we looked for several days the termination of the College session, which took place earlier last year than usual, & the Committee of Correspondence who had your letter in their possession did not sit, & thus till very recently, hence you will at once perceive why it was so long unanswered, & secondly, should you again favour us with a letter we trust the same delay shall not occur.

We are much gratified by your approval of our efforts on behalf of our benighted Countrymen. And we rejoice how that in your Church there is a spirit to send forth some of your Members to proclaim the glorious and noble truths of Christ to our land & its population, then our beloved Ireland. We have every encouragement to urge on Mr. Young as our agitating spirit knows no bounds, & long & deeply has he lamented the existence of Popery. Having set aside forever her claims, & again good through the Queen's Premises by our Assembly, he looks by us unanimously chosen to go forth as the Students Missionary to our fellow Countrymen. He is now laboring in the field with every prospect of success. And we humbly trust that he shall be blessed & be many a soul shall thank God that ever he got a voice at the appointment of the Students Missionary to this delightful work. Popery has long held our Country in her dark, chilling and damning fetters, & long has our land been drenched with the blood of Martyrs. And how long has a persecuting power held his hoodwinded souls firmly fettered in chains of darkness. But we are encouraged to pray and labor on in the holy confidence that there is a day coming when all her abominations shall be fully displayed, when our Countrymen shall forsake her altars and flee, and when our land shall again become the delight of saints.

We can fully appreciate your statements with regard to the Lord giving and when he thinks expedient to remove the engines he employs to keep his testimony. Cause to rejoice, the Lord reigns, he commands, Arise thine? And whenever the Church calls her energies on behalf of a world lying in wickedness, there is the blessing abundantly by his grace and help. Such has been your experience, such has been ours, and such will be the experience of every faithful church throughout the world.

We rejoice to hear that you are not altogether indifferent about the poor Slave, and that you are not the advocates of that abominable system

But we must express at the same time, that your plan for their amelioration is not what we could have wished. We do indeed acknowledge the powerful influence of the Gospel, and its tendency to ameliorate the soul; but we are convinced, that no slave holder either can or will be a faithful preacher of the gospel. For it is not preaching the gospel when a man keeps back a part of the message which he is enjoined to deliver entire, and it is natural to expect that the man whose gain depends upon his fellowman, will pervert every thing which comes from his mouth that unholy passion by which he gets his gains. We well knew how easily the ignorance and prejudice of the people would be excited against the preacher of the gospel, that the preaching of the gospel was all that was required; yet under such circumstances we cannot but think that many thousands of slaves would gladly sacrifice to the demon of cruelness, and like faithful men would plead with a fearless voice against the evil and assist us to advocate the claims of humanity. We also think the voice of an indignant public would be strong enough to take away from those, that cruelness was sought with by the unprincipled and the gospel should be preached, and that with boldness and fearlessness which abhorrence, such an infernal practice as the enslaving of the human species. The eyes of the nation should be held up to public gaze, and the light to shine in the pages of history should be brought to bear on its abettors. So that every one could appreciate your wicked conduct when this wicked does anomaly in your constitution was forever abolished. We have no wish now to enter into details concerning the real and the unhappy case. It is our firm conviction that but few of them are permitted to the glorious gospel of the blessed God. We believe they are held in the fetters of the devil by their cruel masters, and with respect to the few who receive religious instruction of any kind, it is not for the most part dictated upon by any calculation of the guilt and woe that flows from a loud of practices which your laws allow. There are we know some exceptions to the statement. But as a whole we are convinced that the picture is not overdrawn. We indeed when compared with the actual state of things. We would ask you to view this case in the light of that golden rule. Do unto others as you would that they should do to you, and tell us then should they not at once be set free. We would urge you earnestly to use all your efforts for the abolition of the system at once and forever. So that effusion of blood which is now ready for the fatal stroke may not happen. Remember your responsibility. Your station, your influence, your wealth, your talents now point to their immediate duty. Your pastor of your church by his prayers now ascending to the throne of God, and receipts your shall be liberated. Then you will be solemnly bound to use all your influence and efforts for their freedom. The argument that they are not fit for freedom is now utterly worthless. It was that of some of our own people when the Legislature attempted to abolish slavery in their Colonies and dependencies, but past history and present experience all testify to the fallacy of the statement

Slavery is well calculated to bring down on its abettors the judgments of the Most High God who hears the prisoners sighs, and is well calculated to produce social and political evils all which it has done among you. Let it your duty now to advocate their cause, to raise the voice of public opinion against the system, and if need be never after suffer that the man whose hands are dyed with the blood of his brother, to pollute by his unholy touch the sacred emblems of Christian brotherhood and of a Saviours Love, this is your duty see that you discharge it, and if you do, good men in all ages shall point to you as the deliverers of that unhappy race, history hereafter shall enroll your names amid the patriots of your country, and the God of all peace shall bless you in time and throughout eternity.

You ask us what are our opinions with regard to the French encroachments on Tahiti, and the Repeal movement. To the 1st we answer that Protestants of all denominations look on the attempts in the South Sea islands as an evidence of the fell spirit of Popery now mustering her forces and putting forth all her energies for the enslavement of the world, it shews us that the system is still the same persecuting and bloody as it was in the days when the Auto da fe lit up with its lurid fires the streets or did — or when the agonising cries of St. Bartholomew's day resounded through the halls of Paris when the noblest blood in all France was flowing in torrents by the hands of Popish butchers. We are sorry to say that our government looked so calmly on the sufferings of the poor Tahitians, without affording them that protection which they were bound to do, a sad change has come over the rulers of our land in this respect, still we know that Jesus watches over all his people, and we trust the might of the foe shall yet be driven back from their dominions broken and destroyed. The man of sin is giving us daily painful evidence that he is still awake and active anxiously looking forward to the time when his hosts shall again be extended over the face of the globe — when his emissaries shall go forth again numerous as the locusts, causing desolation and death to mark their progress, we much fear from the signs of the times that the ruthless hand of persecution shall again be uplifted against the lives of the saints, we lament their rapid strides to power in the once peaceful valleys of the far West and their efforts to obtain ascendancy among yourselves — but we trust the spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers yet burns in the hearts of their sons, and that all their efforts shall recoil on themselves to their own confusion.

With regard to the Repeal Movement you conjecture that it is essentially a Popish movement, the minds of our poor country men being inflamed by Popish demagogues, in order to advance their own interests, are urged to sever the bonds between England and us, so that Popery should again become triumphant in our land. We rejoice however that all their efforts have been fruitless, and that they are not likely to succeed in their attempts. Through God omnipotent assistance we have no fear, since you wrote the agitation of a good deal subsided and many of the Papists themselves are beginning to see the folly of the scheme, still we have no security against such attempts in future, so long as Popery holds the minds of our country men in her adamantine chains.

Our Church is using all her efforts to spread the light of the glorious gospel among them, we have faithful pastors labouring in the South and West and breaking the bread of life among congregations of converts, already the blue banner of the Covenant is waving triumphantly in many places, where Popery had long reigned supreme, many have hearkened to the command, "Come out of her my people that you be not partakers of her plagues", while many are reading the word of God in their own beloved tongue, yet believing as we do that all human agency will prove ineffectual without the Spirits blessing we would ask you to pray for us, that God would bless our efforts on their

behalf, that the Spirit may enlighten their minds, that the Sun of righteousness may arise with healing under his wings: So that many of our Students here prepared for the ministry, may be brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. We believe many of them are actuated by the Love of God, and we pray that we may be enabled to devote ourselves & them to his service, whenever he shall call them equally prepared to lead on the Sons of Ethiopia to plant the Standard of the Cross on the hills of Zion, or blow the Gospel trumpet in the Cities & Villages of our own beloved Land.

We are delighted to hear of your interest in the Cause of Missions, and trust that your friends & many of your Neighbours & Acquaintance who have gone away to the Seat of War may have returned safely, and are now actively engaged in their home enterprizes. Your name may not probably be amongst that number of your Townsmen who have gone to Edinburgh Leeds the Highlands & Wales, Ireland & France, Germany & Holland, India or the Islands of the Southern Ocean, but we hope there are very few of your acquaintance & Connexion who have not enlisted under the Banner of the Cross. We are glad to hear that your Congregation have of late been favoured with the presence & power of the Holy Ghost in the conversion of Souls, and that you have had a goodly number added to your Church. Surely we may take courage in the Lord our God, and go forward in the name of the Lord of Hosts, for the set time to favour Zion is come, and shall our Country be left in the dark? Let us be up and doing, and the Lord will be with us. Let us be active & diligent in our endeavours to spread the Gospel of the Kingdom, that thousands & tens of thousands may be brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Let us be instant in season & out of season, in private & public, in our families & among our friends, that the Lord may be glorified in the conversion of many Souls. Let us be earnest in prayer, that the Lord may pour out his Spirit upon us from on high, that the wilderness may become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Let us be liberal in our contributions to the Lord's treasury, that the Bible may be translated into all languages, and the Missionaries of the Cross may be supported in their labours among the Heathen. Let us be faithful in the discharge of our duties, that we may be found worthy of the Crown of Righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge will give to all them that love his appearing. Let us be zealous for the Lord of Hosts, that we may be found among the number of those who shall be gathered out of every Kindred, Tongue, People & Nation, who shall stand before the Throne & before the Lamb clothed with white robes & palms in their hands, & cry with a loud voice, Salvation unto our God which sitteth upon the Throne & unto the Lamb. Let us be faithful unto death, that we may receive a Crown of Life. Let us be faithful unto death, that we may receive a Crown of Life. Let us be faithful unto death, that we may receive a Crown of Life.

Dear Brethren, we have been much encouraged in reading your Letter, and we hope that you will continue to write us frequently, and let us know how you are getting on in the Lord's work. We are glad to hear that you have been blessed with a revival of religion among your people, and that many have been converted to God. We are also glad to hear that you have been enabled to raise a considerable sum of money for the Missionary Society. We hope that you will continue to do so, and that you will be enabled to raise a still greater sum. We are also glad to hear that you have been enabled to establish a Sunday School among your people, and that you have been enabled to raise a considerable sum of money for the Sunday School Union. We hope that you will continue to do so, and that you will be enabled to raise a still greater sum. We are also glad to hear that you have been enabled to establish a Bible Class among your people, and that you have been enabled to raise a considerable sum of money for the Bible Society. We hope that you will continue to do so, and that you will be enabled to raise a still greater sum. We are also glad to hear that you have been enabled to establish a Tract Society among your people, and that you have been enabled to raise a considerable sum of money for the Tract Society. We hope that you will continue to do so, and that you will be enabled to raise a still greater sum. We are also glad to hear that you have been enabled to establish a Temperance Society among your people, and that you have been enabled to raise a considerable sum of money for the Temperance Society. We hope that you will continue to do so, and that you will be enabled to raise a still greater sum. We are also glad to hear that you have been enabled to establish a Peace Society among your people, and that you have been enabled to raise a considerable sum of money for the Peace Society. We hope that you will continue to do so, and that you will be enabled to raise a still greater sum. We are also glad to hear that you have been enabled to establish a Missionary Society among your people, and that you have been enabled to raise a considerable sum of money for the Missionary Society. We hope that you will continue to do so, and that you will be enabled to raise a still greater sum.

Signed on behalf of the Students
Committee for Correspondence
John McCready